

Our Young People

My Prayer

DANIEL GARNET BICKERS

Dear Lord, I do not crave to thrill the world with winning witchery of words,
I do not care to mar and mystify thy word with magic marvels of the speaker's art;
I would not juggle with thy gospel's truth, nor seek to add by weak adornments to its charms,—
But let me take one living, glowing coal from off thine altar, and burn it to some inmost heart!

Dear Lord, I do not crave to move the mighty, mingling multitude at will,
And mold the minds of men to make them think my thoughts, and feel my sentiments, and wed my creeds;
I would not have them hang upon my words, and weep and smile in sympathy with all my moods,—
But let me lead, with living words and loving heart, one life to brighter paths and better deeds!

—S. S. Times.

HOW SHALL WE DIVIDE OUR TIME?

Eccl. 3:15

Topic April 30.

In the scripture lesson for this week we have a most important truth taught. Solomon was better at preaching than at practicing and his example is not a good commentary on his words. The truth he suggests here is only a general one and must be applied by each person for himself. Life is not a monotonous doing of one thing but is made up of activities in a thousand directions and wisdom consists in rightly dividing one's time with reference to these activities. The miser will devote his life to laying up treasures upon earth and lose his own soul in the end. The devotee of pleasure will sip life's sweets for a little while and then awake to the weeping and wailing which is the inevitable fruit of a wasted life. On the other hand, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Likewise the religious devotee becomes a fanatic and misses his mark by his very excess of zeal. Songs and prayers are good but laughter and sociability are also good; occasional fasting is good but eating and drinking are also good and necessary. Jesus was called a "gluttonous man" because he "came eating and drinking" but these necessary things in life he kept to their proper place. The Sabbath he used both for worship and good works. He worked until he was weary and then sat by the well to rest. He of course took needed sleep but often he spent the night or the early morning in prayer. He decided everything according to the will of the Father and subordinated everything to the spiritual life. In the midst of the pleasures and cares which come crowding upon us we can do no better than to imitate his example in keeping each in its proper place being careful always to "choose that better part which shall not be taken away."

Idleness is a sin, and mere pleasure-seeking is a sin unless these are for necessary recreation. The world is yet too full of sorrow and want to allow us to ignore its needs and give ourselves to our own enjoyment. "Whether we eat therefore or whether we drink let us do all to the honor and glory of God."

SCRIPTURE LIGHT

- 1 Redeeming the time, Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5; Rom. 12:11.
- 2 A mark of wisdom, Eccl. 8:5.
- 3 The time is short, Ps. 89:47; Jas. 5:14; John 9:4.
- 4 Wrong ways of using time, Acts 17:21; 1 Tim. 5:13; Matt. 6:19; Matt. 24:48-51.
- 5 Times which come to us: Temptation, Lk. 8:13; Opportunity, Lk. 19:44; Persecution, John 16:2; Separation, 2 Tim. 4:6; Need, Heb. 4:16; Fear, Ps. 56:3.
- 6 Things we should take time for: Bible Study, John 15:7; John 5:39. Prayer and Meditation,

Phil. 4:8; Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2; Ps. 119:97. Good Works, Jas. 1:27. Worship, Heb. 10:25. Culture, 1 Tim. 4:14. Business, Rom. 12:11; 1 Tim. 5:8. 7 Guiding principles, Matt. 6:33; 1 Cor. 10:31.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Why should we care how we divide our time?
- 2 To whom does our time belong?
- 3 How may we know whether we are using our time aright?
- 4 How much time should be given to rest and recreation?
- 5 What are some foolish and sinful ways of using time?
- 6 How may we improve the use of our time?
- 7 What can our society do to help our young people to better redeem the time?
- 8 What are some things we are apt to neglect in dividing our time?

C. F. YODER.

Is Dancing an Innocent Amusement?

Selected.

The tendency of this amusement is to drive away all serious thoughts, to dissipate all religious impressions. We have known young men and women who gave good promise of future usefulness in the Christian church, but were drawn into these amusements, and forgot God and religion and everything of a serious nature. Many a pastor can recall with a pained heart a large number of such cases. We doubt few if any recall an exception. We have never yet known a single instance where a person was engaged in the pursuit of these amusements and was at the same time leading an active Christian life. Religious convictions, holy thoughts, and an active Christian influence wither and die in the atmosphere of a dancing-school or ballroom just as surely as in the barroom or the gambling den.

These amusements and their associations result in an exceedingly low form of moral development. Those who indulge in them soon become irreverent. They absent themselves from the house of God. They soon apologize for, and then indulge in, things of which they would once have been ashamed. A person's moral perception is blunted, and his desire for good lessened in just that degree that he follows such amusements.

A great number of young people begin in the dancing-school and ballroom a course of life which ends in utter and dreadful ruin. Archbishop Spalding declared that the confessional revealed the fact that the nineteen-twentieths of the fallen women began their descent in the ballroom. Could accurate statistics be prepared in regard to any of our cities the result would be of a similar nature. The sensuous nature of much of the music, the unnatural fascination, the whirl of excitement, the mutual and familiar relations of the dances—all these influences brought to bear upon the young at an age when they are peculiarly susceptible to them are exceedingly dangerous. The young man or woman who exposes himself or herself to these dangers should be exceedingly fearful lest the worst should overtake them. Multitudes of human souls are lost for time and for eternity thru the influence of this amusement. It is frequently said that people must have some amusements. We grant it. We advocate no

gloomy philosophy of life. Amusements we need; nay, must have. But in all this great world which our Heavenly Father has made so beautiful, so full of sources of pleasure, are there no forms of amusements save those whose associations and results are so full of danger? Are there no happy men, no cheerful women, who never enter places where this amusement is engaged in? One must have food—shall he therefore take poison? One must have drink—shall he therefore take brandy? The safest way is to let dancing severely alone.

The Christian Life

The Love of God

Like a cradle rocking, rocking,
Silent, peaceful, to and fro,
Like a mother's sweet looks dropping
On the little face below,
Hangs the green earth, swinging, turning,
Jarless, noiseless, safe and slow;
Falls the light of God's face bending
Down and watching us below.

And as feeble babes that suffer,
Toss and cry and will not rest,
Are the ones the tender mother
Holds the closest, loves the best;
So when we are weak and wretched,
By our sins weighed down, distressed,
Then it is that God's great patience
Holds us closest, loves us best.

O great heart of God! whose loving
Can not hindered be, or crossed,
Will not weary, will not even
In our death itself be lost—
Love divine, of such great loving
Only mothers know the cost—
Cost of love, which all love passing,
Gave a Son to save the lost.

—Selected.

PRAYER MEETING TOPICS

THE PARABLES.—"THE RICH FOOL."

I The Parable. Luke 12:13-30.

a. Occasion—a man requested Jesus to settle a family quarrel over money left them by their parents. v. 13. (1) Such is a frequent result in laying up for the children. Ps. 39:6; Eccl. 2:18, 19.

b. The character of the rich man. (1) Jesus does not charge him with getting his wealth dishonestly. v. 16. (2) His fault was that he kept it all for himself—covetousness. v. 21. (3) He laid up treasure on earth, rather than in heaven. (4) He put his wealth into larger barns, etc., rather than giving it to God's needs. (5) He failed to recognize that it was God's. Hag. 2:8.

c. Results. (1) God said, "Thou fool." v. 20. (2) He lost not only his wealth but his soul also. Matt. 16:25.

II Lessons.

- a. One may make his money honestly and yet sin and lose his soul in saving it.
- b. Wealth is not to be hoarded, but used for God and good. Prov. 23:4.
- c. God never commanded us to hoard wealth for our children. Ps. 49:6, 14.
- d. He has commanded us to lay up treasures in heaven. vs. 33 and 34.
- e. Covetousness is a sin against God and